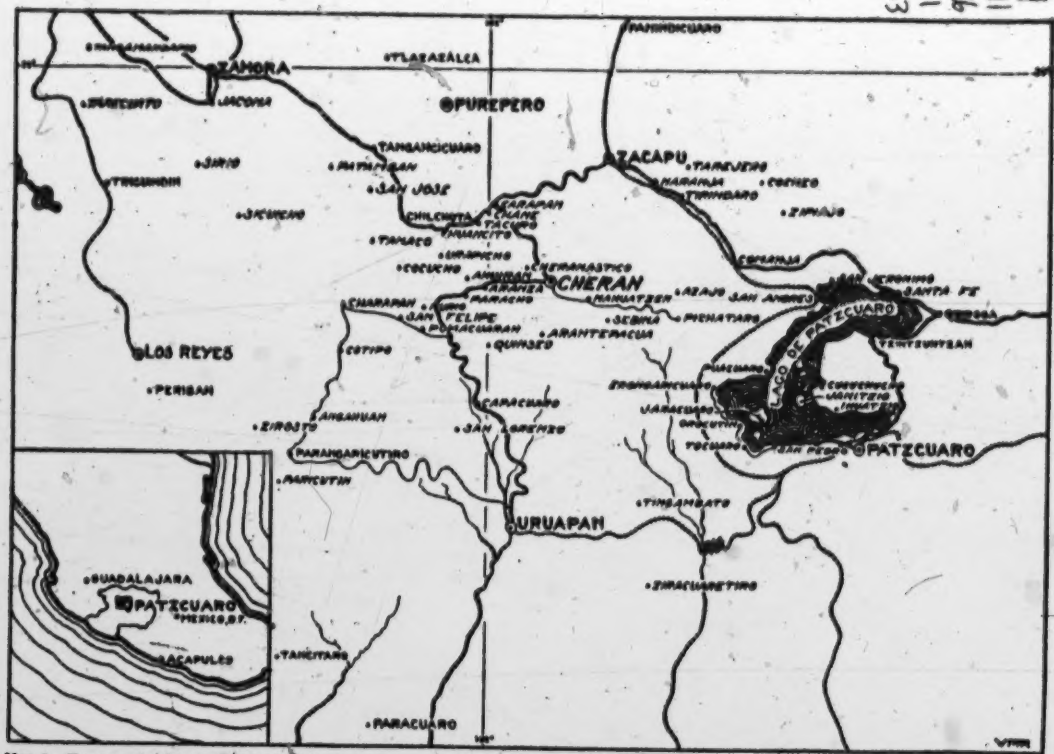


131
491
496
101
563

[9.6]



MAP 1.—Tarascan territory. Towns in *italics* are Tarascan in culture and speech. Towns in *roman* are either of Mestizo origin or are primarily Mestizo in population and culture and Spanish in speech. The list of Tarascan towns shown is complete only in the vicinity of Chichén; the inadequacies of existing maps make it impossible to show all the Tarascan towns with any approach to accuracy.

I: Beals E-5 (1940-1941) 1946

NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascan

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY—FLEXINGTON HALL 2

- 133 Coalcomán, which again reaches elevations of over 10,000 feet. The rain shadow of this range accounts for the subarid conditions of part of the basin area. Although these mountains are little known, apparently they rise fairly steeply on both faces and the coastal area beyond is narrow and of little use.

[132] The drainage of Michoacán presents some peculiarities. In the north and west central region are lakes of various size, of which perhaps the best known is Lake Pátzcuaro. In common with some other lakes in the area, Lake Pátzcuaro has no outlet, but its waters are nevertheless not brackish. The high porosity of the volcanic soil may account for this phenomenon, for the lake has evidently been isolated from other drainages for a long period of time. This isolation is attested by the fact that the native fish are all very primitive viviparous species.

[136] Moreover, despite heavy rainfall in some areas (at Lake Pátzcuaro the average annual rainfall is around 60 inches), there are virtually no permanent streams and even springs are rare. Most Tarascan towns suffer from almost constant water shortage despite the heavy precipitation. In contrast, some of the lower lands have abundant large running streams. In places, underground springs of great size emerge at elevations of about 5,500 feet. Near Uruapan, for example, a large stream is formed by a group of such springs.

[132] The present-day range of the Tarascans cannot be defined with great accuracy, partly because of the lack of detailed studies and partly because of the degree of acculturation undergone by many settlements. Villages which outwardly differ in no visible respect from well-known Tarascan settlements often contain no persons speaking Tarascan. All around the edges of Tarascan territory occur villages in various degrees of assimilation to Mexican culture and with various degrees of physical mixture with the Mestizo population. As a result, the present-day distribution of the Tarascans can only be approximated (map 1).

131
101 On the east, the basin of Lake Pátzcuaro is definitely Tarascan, although some towns, such as Tzintzuntzan, the traditional capital of the Tarascan "Empire," are no longer Tarascan-speaking. The western edge of Tarascan ter-

[p.56]

Sierra Tarascan

- [13] ritory is close to the railroad which runs through the town of Zamora to Los Reyes.
 [10] The southern boundary might be defined roughly as on a line from Los Reyes to Uruapan and thence close to the railway from Uruapan to Pátzcuaro, while the new highway from Mexico City to Guadalajara in some places runs just inside the northern limits and in others, just outside. Within or near the borders of the present-day Tarascan area occur a number of old Mexican towns closely associated with the historic Tarascans and their contemporary culture, which provide the administrative centers and the major market places. These towns are Pátzcuaro, Zacapu, Purépero, Zamora, Los Reyes, and Uruapan. In some instances other towns of local importance have arisen more recently, towns which were once Tarascan but are now occupied by Mestizos and deculturated Tarascans. A good example of such a town is Chilchota.

- [361] Viewed as a whole, the Tarascan area may be characterized generally as an elevated temperate region of sufficient rainfall, deep volcanic soils, and pine or mixed pine and hardwood forests. In detail there are differences, and a number of regions may be identified.

- The easternmost region is that about Lake Pátzcuaro. The lake has an elevation of slightly over 7,000 feet, and most of the villages are either on the shore or upon islands in the lake. The forests have been cleared away around the lake except upon lands too steep to cultivate with the plow. Rainfall is heavy, but is concentrated in the summer months. The climate is temperate and cool even in mid-summer.

North of Lake Pátzcuaro is a large fertile valley or depression near Zacapu, ringed about by hills and mountains covered with forest. Although there is but little difference in elevation from Lake Pátzcuaro, the climate is warmer and some tropical or subtropical plants such as sugarcane are grown on a small scale.

- [912] Over a range of mountains to the west of Zacapu is a fertile valley known as La Cañada. Here the climate is warmer and more arid, as is evidenced by the frequency of irrigation and extensive cultivation of citrus fruit, bananas, and similar tropical and subtropical plants.

[241] [text continues on p. 7a]

[P. 7a] NU34 Tarasco NU34
Pátzcuaro
[P. 6 contains no text]

INTRODUCTION

- 131 The Tarascans are one of the principal
Indian groups on the central plateau of
[161] Mexico, numbering around 55,000 in 1940.
They occupy the central region of the
State of Michoacan, mainly in the Lake
Pátzcuaro area and the Sierra west of it.
171 They live in sixty-six villages (*pueblos*)¹
and a number of dependent hamlets
[101] (*ranchos*) amidst similar settlements of
mestizo Spanish-speaking people.²

171 Except for language, the differences be-
tween the Tarascans and the nearby rural
178 mestizos are not very great from either
the cultural or any other point of view.
Four centuries of living together with and
under people of European culture (Span-
ish colonial or modern Mexican) have
made the Tarascans considerably inter-
dependent with Mexican national life, and
their culture, if analyzed in traits and insti-
tutions, might show more of a Spanish
than an Indian heritage. The loss of Taras-
can speech and consciousness is only one
more step in the process of greater integra-
tion and acculturation into the Mexican
nation, and many of the mestizo villages
near the Tarascans have undergone this
transformation only recently.

This interrelation with the rest of the
nation is seen not only in the content of
their culture but also in their participation
in the social and political conflicts of
Mexico.

668 National issues which have agitated
Mexico in later years have their local
manifestation in Tarascan towns. Conflicts
around land and church rage in many
Tarascan villages.

While the basic issues of landownership
arise out of local conditions, the local
groups fighting those issues are connected
with national political groups. *Agraristas*
(peasants claiming or receiving lands under
the agrarian laws emanating from the
Revolution) are found in many villages.
Lately the Catholic nationalistic move-
ment of the *sinarquistas* has found strong
support among the Tarascans. Their dif-
ferent allegiances make for opposition or
[609] support of the national and state govern-
ments and local agencies, influencing the

1. The terms village and town are used indistinctively throughout this paper to translate the Spanish *pueblo*.

2. West, 1948, 1.

122stitutions for the study of the Tarascans.¹³
 114Work began in 1940 and since then the
 114main investigation has included two community studies, one of Cherán, a large Tarascan speaking town of farmers¹⁴ and Tzintzuntzan, a Spanish speaking town of potters and farmers.¹⁵ West gives a general cultural-geographical survey of the area.¹⁶ Other reports are unpublished as yet or are not related to our problem.

114The field work on which this paper is based, also part of the Tarascan project, took place in 1945. Although drawn for the most part from one single village (Jarácuaró), material on the ideology and lore of the Tarascans was gathered from several other towns. The purpose of the investigation was to obtain a picture of what we might call their world view: ideas and beliefs about the origin and nature of the world, the natural and the supernatural elements, the main religious concepts, their folk science or lore. This kind of material is most frequently expressed in narrative folklore.

121Cherán and Tzintzuntzan, the two communities for which full monographs are available, are rather conservative towns where the agrarian movement has been weak. Jarácuaró, on an island in Lake Pátzcuaro, where most of the author's material was gathered, is a town of hat makers and farmers. From a total population of about 900 only eight men were still agraristas in 1945. Most of the rest of the town considered themselves sinarquistas, were organized, and controlled the local government. Had the problem of this paper been stated before the field work, more material would have been obtained from predominantly agrarista towns, but this monograph deals mostly with the conservative and sinarquista positions. A detailed study of the Tarascan agrarian movement and what it has meant for the Tarascan

13. Rubín de la Borbolla and Beals, 1940; Beals, 1946.

14. Foster, 1948, I.

15. Beals, 1946.

16. Foster, 1948.

17. West, 1948.

[P. 11b]

NU34 Tarasco NU34

Pátzcuaro

12/ culture is greatly needed for an under-
 [107] standing of the problems of the area.

A comparative study is not attempted in this paper. Studies of Indian communities in Central and South America show that similar problems exist in these areas. The change of a folk culture in the direction of greater assimilation by the national culture is best exemplified in Redfield's Yucatan study¹⁷ and it can be assumed to be a general process. The economic organization of the traditional cult is based on the primitive economic mechanisms of reciprocity of services and gifts. Under the impact of a modern economy this organization becomes inadequate and its obligations are felt to be onerous.¹⁸ The attempts at radical change which took place in some Michoacan communities do not seem to be general. In some other cases the change away from expensive obligations to the cult is involved with conversion to Protestantism¹⁹ or can be accomplished gradually without the violent conflict which characterizes this development in Michoacan.²⁰

A comparative study of cases similar to that discussed in this paper would have to look into every local circumstance for the relation between the changing village economy and the economics and organization of the local cult. On the other hand the national pattern in which those communities live undoubtedly influences the form of the change, whether gradual, schismatic or anticlerical.²¹ The Mexican Revolution, which can be understood only in national terms, was the main determinant of the direction of change taken in most Tarascan villages. The influence of Protestant missions also depends on the national policies of the countries concerned. Any comparative study consequently will have to include the relations existing between the national and peasant cultures involved.

17. Redfield, 1941.

18. Mishkin, 1944, 448; Carrasco, 1951, 106-7.

19. For Guatemala, see Tux, personal communication; perhaps also in Peru, see Tschopik, 1947, 48, 53.

20. Carrasco, 1951; Tschopik, 1947, 34, 45-6.

[P. 1-B]

191 The present territory of Tarascan speech consists of a relatively small area (about 3,500 sq. 131 km.) in northwestern Michoacán. Approximately, the modern area extends eastward from the Zamora-Los Reyes railroad to the east shore of Lake Pátzcuaro, and southward from the México-Guadalajara highway to a line drawn between Pátzcuaro and the peak of Tancítaro (map 1).¹ A few small islands of Tarascan-speaking folk exist south of the main area. Within the present 161 area nearly 55,000 individuals of indigenous speech live in 66 Tarascan pueblos and 50 ranchos.

131 Four geographical regions comprise the modern 101 Tarascan area. (1) The Sierra (called by the Tarascans Sierra or Siéris) is the largest of the regions, the main portion of which extends westward from Lake Pátzcuaro to slightly east of the Zamora-Los Reyes railroad.^{1a} The northern

102 ¹ Map 1 is based on an enlarged portion of sheet 945A (Uruapan) of the AAF Preliminary Base, 1:500,000. This sheet was compiled by the U. S. 131 Aeronautical Chart Service in January 1945 from AAF trimetrogon photography taken in December 1942. Positions and names of topographic features which appear on the accompanying map were checked on the ground 133 during the spring of 1946. Some errors were encountered on the original map: misspelled localities (e. g. Ajuno), small errors in routes of highways and railroads, mistakes in elevations. Drainage was found to be fairly correct. On map 1 only the more important trails are indicated. Numbered localities refer to the following ranchos:

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Guaschamillo. | 14. San Marcos Arachó- | 37. Patambicho. |
| 2. Aranza. | cuta. | 38. Ojo de Agua. |
| 3. Las Trojes. | 15. Huancho. | 39. Ichupio. |
| 4. Las Cañas. | 16. Las Cócinas. | 40. Turelio. |
| 5. El Venado. | 17. San Nicolás. | 41. Ucasandistana. |
| 6. Tapan. | 18. La Alberca. | 42. La Vinata. |
| 7. Tierras Blancas. | 19. La Atascada. | 43. Las Granadas. |
| 8. La Mesa. | 20. El Rosario. | 44. Yumén. |
| 9. La Tinaja. | 21. El Tepamal. | 45. Tecosna. |
| 10. Queréndaro. | 22. Tepetate. | 46. Urandén Morales. |
| 11. Zaramora. | 23. Tejamanil. | 47. Urandén Morales. |
| 12. San Luis Sorana. | 24. Poápatiro. | 48. Urandén Carian. |
| 13. La Jolla. | 25. Chupitiro. | 49. El Padre. |
| | 26. Opengudo. | |

The following Tarascan ranchos (listed in the official 1940 census) are not located: Trinitisiba (municipio of Chilchota); Agua Escondida (municipio of Tangancitaro); Las Encinillas and Los Laureles (municipio of Tancítaro); La Providencia and El Tropezón (municipio of Los Reyes); El Tejocote (municipio of Paracho); Revolución (municipio of Zongotitlán); and Itzupáman (municipio of Tzitzuntzan).

^{1a} On modern maps the high area west of Lake Pátzcuaro is termed "Sierra de los Tarascos." In colonial documents the area was usually called "Sierra de Michoacán."

[P. 1c]

- 131 boundary approximates the México-Guadalajara
 101 highway, while the steep escarpment that plunges
 into the Balsas-Tepalcatepec Basin marks its
 southern limit. An eastward extension lies south
 and southeast of the lake and joins with the Sierra
 de Ozumatlán in eastern Michoacán. Containing
 [162] 60 percent of the present indigenous group, the
 Sierra west of the lake is the modern center of the
 Tarascans. (2) The Lake Pátzcuaro (Japúndaru,
 Intámecuaru) area contains 19 percent of the
 [162] Tarascan population distributed in 13 pueblos and
 13 ranchos along the lake shore and on the islands.
 Formerly one of the political centers of the
 Tarascan Empire, the lake region, in terms of
 indigenous speech, has declined rapidly since late
 colonial times. The speech of the entire south
 shore and the towns of Quiroga, Tzintzuntzan, and
 [191] Erongarícuaro is predominantly Spanish. North
 and northeast of the Sierra lie two small areas of
 indigenous speech, which appear to be remnants
 of the once large northern Tarascan zone. One of
 these is (3) La Cañada (Eríséman), a small narrow
 valley located at the northern edge of the Sierra.
 This valley was the region of the "onze pueblos" of
 colonial days. Today nine towns with 9 percent
 [162] of the total Tarascan population are clustered
 along a strip of alluvium within the valley. (4)
 The other remnant of the northern zone lies north
 and northwest of Lake Pátzcuaro and contains
 [162] seven pueblos and 9.5 percent of the total number
 of Tarascan-speaking folk.² Other regions of
 Tarascan speech consist of "islands" south of the
 main area. Cuanajo, located southwest of Mo-
 relia in the western extension of the Sierra, is the
 last fragment of the former indigenous area south-
 east of Lake Pátzcuaro. San Angel Zurumucapio
 and the newly formed towns (Caltzontzin and
 Villa Silva) harboring refugees from the stricken

² These pueblos include Tirindaro, Tarejaro, and Naranjo on the shore of
 former Zacapu marsh; Asajo and Osmánje on the northeastern edge of the
 Sierra; Taramendo and Zipitajo at the northern foot of Cerro el Zirato.

¹ [Probably should read "eastern" if referring
 to Tarascan Sierra.—Analyst.]

[P. 2-a]

- 131 zone around Parícutin Volcano, are the remaining
 ● 101 predominantly Tarascan settlements in the *tierra
 templada*, the upper part of the plateau escarp-
 [162] ment (2 percent of Tarascan population in 1940).
 [191] Formerly an important part of the Tarascan
 Empire, the hot lands of the Tepalcatepec and
 Balsas Basins (*tierra caliente*, Jurío) have lost
 completely the last vestige of spoken Tarascan.

A small number of Tarascan-speaking folk live
 in some of the larger mestizo towns adjacent to
 the main Tarascan area: Uruapan, Pátzcuaro,
 Coeneo, Zacapu, Zamora. With the possible
 exception of a few old households in Uruapan, the
 presence of aboriginal speech in the large mestizo
 [166] settlements probably represents a recent influx
 from rural areas (a desire for urban life, migration
 from the volcano-devastated areas) rather than
 linguistic remnants.

THE PHYSIOGRAPHIC AREAS

- 133 **The Sierra.**—The Tarascan "Sierra" is not a
 mountain chain; it is rather a volcanic plateau,
 whose average elevation is some 1,500 feet higher
 than that of the surrounding areas and whose
 surface has been roughened by large composite
 volcanoes, scores of small cinder cones, and ex-
 tensive lava flows (*malpais*). Lying within Mex-
 ico's transcontinental volcanic axis, the Sierra is
 the locale of the country's newest active volcano,
 Parícutin.³ Within the central part of the area
 elevations range from 6,900 feet to over 12,660
 feet (Cerro de Tancítaro). The altitude of the
 plateau increases from west to east. Elevations
 of towns in the western half of the Sierra range
 from 5,180 feet (Atapan) to 7,800 feet (Pamatá-
 cuaro); in the eastern half, from 8,040 feet (Sevina)
 to 8,460 feet (Cumachuén), the highest pueblo in
 the Sierra west of Lake Pátzcuaro. Even higher
 settlements (e. g. the rancho of Cruz Gorda,
 8,987 feet) exist southeast of the lake, and the
 highest point in Michoacán, the Cerro de San
 Andrés (12,840 feet), lies in the Sierra de Ozu-
 matlán, 62 km. east of Morelia.

Tertiary and Quaternary vulcanism has pro-
 duced the major land forms in the Sierra (map 2).
 In age the volcanic forms range from probably
 Eocene to the present time. The oldest are mas-
 sive composite volcanoes, the highest and most

³ The chief scientific references on the Parícutin Volcano include Ordóñez
 (1945), Robles Ramos (1945), Pérez Peña (1946), Mexico City Universidad
 Nacional Instituto de Geología (1945).

Mexico, while hockey hitherto has not been reported. Neither is there evidence that hockey type games were ever played by the Spanish. Angáhuán, the only village for which the game is reported, is one of the most isolated and conservative Tarascan villages. The games follow:

*Udsukuni.*⁶ The game is played by two opposing sides of equal numbers. Any number may play. Each player has a stick, *udsukarókua*, in either of the two forms shown in figure 1. Mango wood is preferred. The ball, *tarándukua*, is often made of rags, but one made by winding cord about a center formed of a white substance secreted by the green worms of the madrone tree is preferred. The latter type of ball is called *tarándukua tsándri*.

The game is always played around a block of the town. The starting point is a street intersection. The two teams line up as shown in figure 2. A representative of each team stands in the center of the intersection. One throws the ball in the air and each player then tries to knock it toward his own team. The winning team must take the ball around the block back to the starting street intersection.

The teams are sometimes representatives of different blocks in the town. The block chief, an official appointed annually by the mayor for each block in the town, names the men who will play. Men so named may not refuse to play. The most important occasion on which the game is played is the day following the feast of Conception, December 8. This day is called *sirángua*. An official called the *kíñi*, who cares for the hospital (formerly a hospital in fact but now the residence of the *kíñi*; and the repository of ceremonial equipment) and runs errands for the heads of the ceremonial hierarchy in the church, makes an especially big ball of rags for the game. Two very large teams play with this ball, playing around each block of the town successively.⁷

Aksúperani. Two men play with the same stick and ball used in *udsukuni*. The players start in the middle of a street and each attempts to knock the ball to an established goal.

Aldsukuni. This game is played at Cherán, a large town 20 miles northeast of Urapán. Any number of players compete in two teams of equal size. Each player has a stick, *aldsukua*, curved at one end and from a meter to a meter and a half in length. The ball, *apásikua*, is made of rags wrapped with cord. The players line up opposite one another according to the numbers engaged (fig. 3). The contest begins in the middle of a block and each side attempts to take the ball to the opponents' end of the block. A representative of each team first tosses a coin or pot sherd at a line. The man whose piece is nearest the line

⁶ The recording of native terms is in the official alphabet now being used by the Departamento Autónomo de Asuntos Indígenas. [104]

⁷ The resemblance to the winter hockey games of the Southwest is very suggestive. Silvia Rendón writes that the game is played daily from December 9 to Carnival and that each block and every man competes during this period. [171]

A TARASCAN CACICAZGO
Structure and Function

Paul W. Friedrich

66 CACIQUISMO is a type of informal Hispano-American government operating to enforce the partially arbitrary control of an association of individuals under one leader, the cacique, a term derived through Spanish from the Arawak (Alegria, 1952). Caciquismo is a largely unstudied and partially covert feature of Mexican culture. It has long been dubbed a "national social problem."

[101] A cacicazgo is a concrete case of caciquismo. Our primary reference is to the cacicazgo in a village, here called Durasno, which is part of Tarascan society, a group of some seventy thousand Indians living in the cool green mountains of northwestern Michoacan, Mexico. Salient traits of Durasno culture are: a population of fourteen hundred, bilingualism, plow and hoe agriculture, corn as a cash crop, adobe housing, a corn-beans-chili diet, a total absence of handicrafts, and a leading role in the radical, anti-clerical politics of the state. The ejido land, won in 1924, is administered by the community and worked in plots by families of socially equal peasants. The generalizations that follow are based on a detailed description and analysis of the culture for the following historical periods: first, the indigenous culture of 1885; second, a troubled time following the desiccation by Spanish capitalists of an adjacent, life-giving, marshy lake (1900-21), coupled with the rising control of a regional landlord-mestizo-clerical faction; third, a period covering the struggle for the rich, black soil of the ejido (1921-26), with the crystallization of an agrarian cacicazgo; fourth, a period of twenty-two years of sanguinary contention between changing factions (1926-48); finally, a period of increasingly centralized control under the present-day cacique and his oligarchy. The methods and concepts of ethnology, political science, and sociology were severally employed. The political culture of Durasno was set within the total context of village life and the larger structures of area, state, and nation (Friedrich, 1957).¹

594 66 The principal structural units of Durasno culture have definite and often discrete political functions. The primary relations between men within the nuclear family enjoin active political loyalty that has practically never been broken. (The one known case in over fifty years in which brothers sided opposite factions is easily understandable on psychological grounds.) The father-son-brother block is the minimal and the most cohesive political unit of which larger structures are composed; intrigues must be conducted in terms of these blocks because every political act automatically involves all the primary relatives of both the nuclear families of the individual concerned (Levi-Strauss, 1945). The father in Durasno culture leads the nuclear political block. The inner core of a cacicazgo always includes the primary relatives of the cacique. The cacique leads this inner core and plays the role of an actual or would-be patriarch over the entire village. Older, charismatic caciques are called "tata," or "father," by the Tarascans. Thus the nuclear family has political functions in the village at large, and these functions are especially important in defining the cacicazgo.

612 423 66 A second structural block in Durasno politics is the ejidal family, a group of one or

186 In Paracho, when the question of ethnic identification was considered, it was found that cultural and linguistic rather than biological factors were indeed most important in the thinking of the citizenry. Such social distance as exists between members of the town, however, cannot be said to stem from an individual's classification as either Indio or Mestizo.
 • [101] Paracho is located in the heart of the Tarascan Sierra and prides itself not only on being the cabecera (seat of government) of the municipio (county), but also on being a cultural and trade center for the people of surrounding towns — "The Capital of the Sierra" is the way in which its citizens describe the town. In this role Paracho has dealings with the Tarascan-speaking Indians of nearby communities and, to some extent at least, recognizes its dependence upon the good will of these people for its own continued pre-eminence in the region. Parachoans consider that their activities, behavior and interests serve as a model for the people in the smaller towns. For this reason, the interests of the residents of Paracho are directed toward the more Indian characteristics of their neighbors as well as toward the more Mestizo-like activities which many Parachoans have accepted as their standard of behavior, a type of behavior which is demanded of participants in an "urban-like" culture. There is no overt conflict between these two cultural models which coexist in the region.

556 Class distinctions within Paracho are incipient and, hence, not yet formalized. In general, prestige within the community accrues to those
 563 with wealth, with nice homes, and who live better than others. Tarascans
 565 (Indians), as well as Mestizos can and do achieve such status, and both groups are to be found living in all sections of the pueblo. People are not considered Mestizo because they are wealthy, nor are all the poor in Paracho called Indian. There are no recognizable Indian or Mestizo subgroups in Paracho, a fact indicative of the indifference of the citizens to such distinctions within the town limits. Wealth and poverty, local importance and insignificance may characterize siblings within the same family.

186 There is considerable indefiniteness among Parachoans concerning their ethnic identity. Using those criteria accepted elsewhere in Latin
 563 America, Paracho is culturally, in the main, a Mestizo town with an urban orientation. We were told on several occasions that Paracho is a Mestizo community. However, a large proportion of the people consider themselves to be Indian, although at the same time these same people believe themselves to be "better" than those in the "small Indian places" in the vicinity. As an example of the two standards of identification one can cite the case of the local head of the Federal project to combat illiteracy through the use of written Tarascan. He is a Parachoan by birth. He is referred to by members of the community as Mestizo, yet in the same breath these people say, "Camilo is a son of the pueblo because he has so much interest in things Indian." Most of his work, however, takes place

10:Beals & Hatcher E-4,5 (1941-1942) 1943
NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascans

296

América Indígena

101 The village of Cherán is primarily an agricultural village, at an
511 elevation of approximately 8500 feet, in the mountains between Pátz-
cuaro and Uruapan, Michoacán, México. The climate consequently is
temperate. In comparison with other villages of the region, Cherán is
relatively prosperous and it is probable that the diet is better than in
the majority of Tarascan towns. In terms of Tarascan standards,
probably only between ten and twenty percent of the population is to
be classed as "poor". On the other hand, there are no markedly wealthy
families.

126 Three methods of collecting data were used. One, followed pri-
marily by Sra. Rendón, was the collection of a complete list of foods
eaten and the compilation of a large number of menus of actual meals
for as many families as was possible. In addition, the entire staff col-
lected recipes for specific dishes. These, although of ethnographic
interest, were of little use in the present study. Finally, the cooperation
124 of a number of literate families was enlisted to get a complete record
of the food consumed over a fifteen day period.

146 The final method naturally was the most valuable. Unfortunately,
262 the number of cooperating families was small. Moreover, the accuracy
of the returns probably varied considerably. In many cases, the amount
of money spent was given rather than the quantity purchased but, as
very detailed studies of prices had been made it was possible to equate
prices and quantities with some accuracy. One considerable source of
error is the amount of vegetables such as cabbage, greens, and so on
gathered from gardens or from woods. In addition, a certain amount
of fruit or "snacks", purchased in the market or from street vendors
had to be estimated from knowledge of general habits. The most
specific records covered only a period in the late Fall and do not take
into account some slight seasonal variations in the diet. Despite all
these deficiencies, the various types of data seem to point to the same
general conclusions, and we believe that these are reasonably valid.
if the specific results are viewed with proper reserve.

146 An average weekly diet for a Cherán adult is presented in table I.²
262

114 In 1941-1942. The study formed a part of the Program of Anthropological
Investigations among the Tarascan Indians, a joint enterprise of the Uni-
versity of California, the Escuela Nacional de Antropología, the Instituto
Nacional de Antropología e Historia, and the Departamento de Asuntos
Indígenas. Analysis of the data was made by the junior author, Evelyn
Hatcher.

128 ² In compiling the tables, the following sources were used: Chatfield
113 and Adams, *Proximate Composition of American Food Materials*, United
States Department of Agriculture Circular N° 549, 1940; Chatfield and
McLaughlin, *Proximate Composition of Fresh Fruits*, United States Depart-

[P. iii]

PREFACE

The Florida State Museum's field of interest includes the greater Caribbean area. It is appropriate that the first non-archaeological issue of the *Contributions, Social Sciences*, should pertain to Mexico, our sister republic to the south; should refer to the interesting but much neglected Tarascan Indians; should be prepared by Maurice Boyd, Associate Professor of Social Sciences at the University of Florida; and should be based on field work done by him while a visiting professor at the University of Michoacán in Mexico.

The Tarascans are relatively unknown in comparison with the Aztecs. They are covered by single line references or, at most, a paragraph in books written in English which deal with the history of Mexico. Yet these people were nearly the equals of the Aztecs both in military strength and cultural attainments. It is primarily an accident of geography which gave the Aztecs the greater prominence.

Dr. Boyd has made a special study of the Tarascans—their life, their history, and their culture. We are glad to present the first results of this research.

Ripley P. Bullen
Curator of Social Sciences

[P. iv is blank]

EIGHT TARASCAN LEGENDS

648 prevented the Tarascans from helping Montezuma when he sought additional support against Cortez. Consequently, the Spaniards were able to conquer the Aztec and Tarascan empires separately.

538
173
[648] In the legends will be found specific references to some of these historic events and to places located on the accompanying maps (Figs. 1-2). These tales explain some of the natural features of the Tarascan countryside. Frequently, political history is combined with natural history.

539
171 Except for references to the four cardinal directions in the first legend and to omens and dreams predicting the coming of the Spaniards in the last two tales, there is no similarity between these Tarascan legends and those of other Indian groups of Mexico.

COLLECTION OF THE LEGENDS

• 101
114
126 The Tarascan legends and folk tales presented in this paper are a select few of those secured in 1953 by the author and his wife while he was Visiting Professor of History at the University of Michoacán in Morelia, Mexico. They were collected in the villages of Indians who still use the pre-Conquest language and speak of themselves as *Purépecha* rather than as Tarascans.

101 The etymology of the word "Tarascan" is disputed. The traditional explanation, probably correct, is that the conquistadores took Indian women as wives or concubines and were called *Tarascué* (son-in-law) by the fathers of the girls. Thinking that the term was the name of the tribe, the Spaniards referred to all as *Tarascos* (Foster, 1948, p. 9).

115
539 The legend of creation was told in the barrio of Santa Maria in Morelia by Ignacia Peña, a full-blooded Tarascan *serviente* (housemaid) with a third-grade education; the story of the tribal journey to Michoacán was given in Copula by Luis Espinosa, a *meztizo* with a secondary education, who specializes in pottery making; the tale of Tacamba was told by Fidelia Perez, a full-blooded Tarascan woman with no formal education, in the pueblo of San Gerónimo on the northern shore of Lake Pátzcuaro; the legend of Lake Cuitzeo was a collective effort by several natives